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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/640,797	08/18/2000	Joel Goldman	2685/5666	6875

7590
Kenyon & Kenyon
1500 K Street N W
Suite 700
Washington, DC 20005

07/09/2004

EXAMINER

YAO, KWANG BIN

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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2667

DATE MAILED: 07/09/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/640,797

Applicant(s)

GOLDMAN ET AL.

Examiner

Kwang B. Yao

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 14 April 2004.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-4,6-40 and 42-94 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 31-36,64-67 and 82-94 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-4,6-30,37-40,42-63 and 68-81 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 3.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Double Patenting

1. The nonstatutory double patenting rejection is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the "right to exclude" granted by a patent and to prevent possible harassment by multiple assignees. See *In re Goodman*, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *In re Longi*, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir. 1985); *In re Van Ornum*, 686 F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970); and, *In re Thorington*, 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969).

A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321(c) may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a nonstatutory double patenting ground provided the conflicting application or patent is shown to be commonly owned with this application. See 37 CFR 1.130(b).

Effective January 1, 1994, a registered attorney or agent of record may sign a terminal disclaimer. A terminal disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 CFR 3.73(b).

2. Claims 1-4, 6-30, 37-40, 42-63, 68-81 are rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-65 of U.S. Patent No. 6,134,235. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because the application's claims merely broaden the scope of the patented claims by not claiming some elements. The following is the comparison between the patented

claims and the claims in the instant application. U.S. Patent No. 6,134,235 claims the following limitations: 1. A system for bridging a first communications network having a payload subnetwork and a signaling subnetwork with a second communications network that is packet-switched, comprising: a. a communications management object that coordinates the transfer of information between the first communications network and the second communications network, wherein the communications management object coordinates the transfer of information between the first communications network and the second communications network by initiating at least one of the tasks of communications session setup, communications session tear down, bridging of two communications requests or routing of a communications to a communications access point in one of the first communications network or the second communications network; b. a payload object linked to the communications management object, wherein said payload object transfers payload information between the system and the payload subnetwork of the first communications network; c. a signaling object linked to the communications management object, wherein said signaling object transfers signaling information between the system and the signaling subnetwork of the first communications network in accordance with a signaling protocol associated with the signaling subnetwork; and d. a packet object linked to the communications management object, wherein said packet object transfers payload and address information between the system and the second communications network in accordance with a communications protocol associated with the second communications network. 2. The system according to claim 1, wherein the payload object may be linked to a plurality of access points contained within the payload subnetwork of the first communications network. 3. The system according to claim 1, wherein the signaling object may be linked to a plurality of access points

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contained within the signaling subnetwork of the first communications network. 4. The system according to claim 1, wherein the packet object may be linked to a plurality of access points contained within the second communications network. 5. The system according to claim 1, wherein the communications management object further coordinates the handling of operations, administration, maintenance and provisioning functions. 6. The system according to claim 1, further comprising an application resource object that coordinates the handling of operations, administration, maintenance and provisioning functions. 7. The system according to claim 1, further including an application database, said database comprising communications contact information for a plurality of users. 8. The system according to claim 7, wherein the application database further comprises a set of user profiles including a user's preferred communications mode for having communications contact established with another. 9. The system according to claim 1, wherein the payload object includes signal processing capability for processing the payload information. 10. The system according to claim 1, wherein the packet object includes signal processing capability for processing the payload information. 11. The system according to claim 1, further comprising an application resource object having signal processing capability for processing the payload information. 12. The system according to claim 1, wherein the communications management object coordinates a transfer of information between the first communications network and the second communications network by causing the system to perform the tasks of: a. determining a desired characteristic associated with a requested communication; b. determining traffic conditions for each of the first communications

network and the second communications network; and c. determining from the traffic conditions and from the desired characteristic associated with the requested communication whether to route the communication to the first communications network or to the second communications network. 13. The system according to claim 12, wherein the desired characteristic associated with a requested communications includes at least one of a desired quality of service for the communication, a time during which the communication is to be routed, a cost of routing the communication, or a user's preferred communications mode for having communications contact established with another. 14. The system according to claim 12, wherein the communications management object coordinates a transfer of information between the first communications network and the second communications network by causing the system to further perform the tasks of: e. selecting an access point of the determined network to which the communication is to be routed; and f. initiating the routing of the communication to the selected access point for the determined network. 15. The system according to claim 1, wherein the communications management object coordinates a transfer of information between the first communications network and the second communications network by causing the system to perform at least one of the tasks of: a. initiating a communications contact in response to a user clicking a hypertext link; b. sending a message to a user requesting a return communications contact; c. scheduling a time to initiate a communications contact between two users; d. initiating a sequence of communications contacts until the party to be contacted is reached; and e. directing a communications contact addressed to a user to a mailbox. 16. The system according to claim 1, wherein the communications management

object coordinates a transfer of information between the first communications network and the second communications network by causing the system to route a communication based upon at least one of a desired quality of service for the communication, a time during which the communication is to be routed, a cost of routing the communication, or a user's preferred communications mode for having communications contact established with another. 17. The system according to claim 1, wherein the communications management object coordinates a transfer of information between the first communications network and the second communications network by causing the system to bridge a communications session between two users such that information is transferred between the users over each of the first communications network and the second communications network. 18. The system according to claim 1, further comprising an application resource object that coordinates the handling of multimedia-enhanced voice communications. 19. The system according to claim 18, wherein the handling of multimedia-enhanced voice communications includes receiving voice information over the first communications network and information other than voice information over the second communications network. 20. The system according to claim 19, wherein the information other than voice information received over the second communications network is directed to a multimedia mailbox. 21. The system according to claim 1, further comprising an application resource object that coordinates the task of universal messaging, said task of universal messaging including the integration of email messages, facsimile messages, and voice messages into a common mailbox. 22. The system according to claim 21, wherein the task of universal messaging further includes the conversion of the content of messages from one format to another. 23. The system according to claim 21, wherein the task of universal messaging

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further includes retaining the multimedia content of received messages. 24. The system according to claim 21, wherein the task of universal messaging further includes initiating a return message in response to a user clicking a hypertext link. 25. The system according to claim 21, wherein the task of universal messaging includes causing the system to perform at least one of the tasks of: a. retrieving at least one of a stored e-mail message, a stored voice mail message, or a stored facsimile message, wherein the stored e-mail message, the stored voice mail message, and the stored facsimile message may be stored in different sites; b. scheduling of delivery and storage of requested multimedia information; c. storing a message; d. printing a message; and e. forwarding a message. 26. The system according to claim 25, wherein the at least one of a stored e-mail message, a stored voice mail message, or a stored facsimile message may be retrieved by invoking an interactive voice response system that facilitates retrieval of a text-based message using a telephone. 27. The system according to claim 1, wherein information is retrieved from a Web-based server accessible over the second communications network using a telephone linked to the system through the first communications network. 28. The system according to claim 27, wherein the information retrieved from a Web-based server is directed by the system to at least one of a multimedia device or a multimedia mailbox. 29. The system according to claim 27, wherein the information retrieved from a Web-based server is converted from one format to another. 30. A system for bridging a first communications network having a payload subnetwork and a signaling subnetwork with a second communications network that is packet-switched, comprising: a. a communications management object that coordinates the transfer of information between the first communications network and the second communications network wherein the communications management object coordinates the transfer of information between the first

communications network and the second communications network by initiating at least one of the tasks of communications session setup, communications session tear down bridging of two communications requests or routing of a communications to a communications access point in one of the first communications network or the second communications network. b. a plurality of payload objects linked to the communications management object, wherein each payload object transfers payload information between the system and the payload subnetwork of the first communications network; c. a plurality of signaling objects linked to the communications management object, wherein each signaling object transfers signaling information between the system and the signaling subnetwork of the first communications network in accordance with a signaling protocol associated with the signaling subnetwork; and d. a plurality of packet objects linked to the communications management object, wherein each packet object transfers payload and address information between the system and the second communications network in accordance with a communications protocol associated with the second communications network. 31. The system according to claim 30, further comprising a network for linking the plurality of payload objects, the plurality of signaling objects and the plurality of packet objects to the communications management object. 32. The system according to claim 30, wherein the physical locations of the plurality of payload objects, the plurality of signaling objects and the plurality of packet objects are spread across a geographic area. 33. The system according to claim 30, wherein at least one of the plurality of payload objects may be linked to a plurality of access points contained within the payload subnetwork of the first communications network. 34. The system according to claim 30, wherein at least one of the plurality of signaling objects may be linked to a plurality of access points contained within the signaling subnetwork of the first

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communications network. 35. The system according to claim 30, wherein at least one of the plurality of packet objects may be linked to a plurality of access points contained within the second communications network. 36. A method of bridging a first communications network having a payload subnetwork and a signaling subnetwork with a second communications network that is packet-switched, comprising the steps of: a. establishing a first communications link to the payload subnetwork of the first communications network for communicating payload information; b. establishing a second communications link to the signaling subnetwork of the first communications network for communicating signaling information in accordance with a signaling protocol associated with the signaling subnetwork; c. establishing a third communications link to the second communications network for communicating information in accordance with a communications protocol associated with the second communications network; and d. coordinating the transfer of information between the first communications network and the second communications network using the first communications link, the second communications link and the third communications link, wherein the step of coordinating the transfer of information between the first communications network and the second communications network includes initiating at least one of the tasks of communications session setup, communications session tear down, bridging of two communications requests or routing of a communications to a communications access point in one of the first communications network or the second communications network. 37. The method according to claim 36, wherein the first communications link is established through one of a plurality of available access points contained within the payload subnetwork of the first communications network. 38. The method according to claim 36, wherein the second communications link is established through one of a

plurality of available access points contained within the signaling subnetwork of the first communications network. 39. The method according to claim 36, wherein the third communications link is established through one of a plurality of available access points contained within the second communications network. 40. The method according to claim 36, further comprising the step of coordinating operations, administration, maintenance and provisioning functions. 41. The method according to claim 36, wherein the step of coordinating the transfer of information between the first communications network and the second communications network includes use of a database containing communications contact information for a plurality of users. 42. The method according to claim 41, wherein the database further contains a set of user profiles including a user's preferred communications mode for having communications contact established with another. 43. The method according to claim 36, further comprising the step of processing payload information using signal processing techniques. 44. The method according to claim 36, wherein the step of coordinating the transfer of information between the first communications network and the second communications network includes the steps of: a. determining a desired characteristic associated with a requested communication; b. determining traffic conditions for each of the first communications network and the second communications network; and c. determining from the traffic conditions and from the desired characteristic associated with the requested communication whether to route the communication to the first communications network or to the second communications network. 45. The method according to claim 44, wherein the desired characteristic associated with a requested communications includes at least one of a desired

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quality of service for the communication, a time during which the communication is to be routed, a cost of routing the communication, or a user's preferred communications mode for having communications contact established with another. 46. The method according to claim 44, wherein the step of coordinating the transfer of information between the first communications network and the second communications network further includes the steps of: e. selecting an access point of the determined network to which the communication is to be routed; and f. initiating the routing of the communication to the selected access point for the determined network. 47. The method according to claim 36, wherein the step of coordinating the transfer of information between the first communications network and the second communications network includes at least one of the steps of: a. initiating a communications contact in response to a user clicking a hypertext link; b. sending a message to a user requesting a return communications contact; c. scheduling a time to initiate a communications contact between two users; d. initiating a sequence of communications contacts until the party to be contacted is reached; and e. directing a communications contact addressed to a user to a mailbox. 48. The method according to claim 36, wherein the step of coordinating the transfer of information between the first communications network and the second communications network includes the step of routing a communication based upon at least one of a desired quality of service for the communication, a time during which the communication is to be routed, a cost of routing the communication, or a user's preferred communications mode for having communications contact established with another. 49. The method according to claim 36, wherein the step of coordinating the transfer of information between the first communications network and the second communications network includes the step of bridging a communications session between two users such that information

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is transferred between the users over each of the first communications network and the second communications network. 50. The method according to claim 36, further comprising the step of coordinating multimedia-enhanced voice communications. 51. The method according to claim 36, wherein the step of coordinating multimedia-enhanced voice communications includes receiving voice information over the first communications network and information other than voice information over the second communications network. 52. The method according to claim 51, wherein the step of coordinating multimedia-enhanced voice communications further includes directing the information other than voice information received over the second communications network to a multimedia mailbox. 53. The method according to claim 36, further comprising the step of universal messaging, said step of universal messaging including the integration of e-mail messages, facsimile messages, and voice messages into a common mailbox. 54. The method according to claim 53, wherein the step of universal messaging further includes converting the content of messages from one format to another. 55. The method according to claim 53, wherein the step of universal messaging further includes retaining the multimedia content of received messages. 56. The method according to claim 53, wherein the step of universal messaging further includes initiating a return message in response to a user clicking a hypertext link. 57. The method according to claim 53, wherein the step of universal messaging further includes at least one of the steps of: a. retrieving at least one of a stored e-mail message, a stored voice mail message, or a stored facsimile message, wherein the stored e-mail message, the stored voice mail message, and the stored facsimile message may be stored in different sites; b. scheduling of delivery and storage of requested multimedia information; c. storing a message; d. printing a message; and e. forwarding a message. 58. The method

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according to claim 57, wherein the at least one of a stored e-mail message, a stored voice mail message, or a stored facsimile message may be retrieved by invoking an interactive voice response system that facilitates retrieval of a text-based message using a telephone. 59. The method according to claim 36, wherein the step of coordinating the transfer of information between the first communications network and the second communications network includes the step of retrieving information from a Web-based server accessible over the second communications network using a telephone linked to the method through the first communications network. 60. The method according to claim 59, wherein the information retrieved from a Web-based server is directed to at least one of a multimedia device or a multimedia mailbox. 61. The method according to claim 59, wherein the information retrieved from a Web-based server is converted from one format to another. 62. A method of bridging a first communications network having a payload subnetwork and a signaling subnetwork with a second communications network that is packet-switched, comprising the steps of: a. establishing a first plurality of communications links to the payload subnetwork of the first communications network for communicating payload information; b. establishing a second plurality of communications links to the signaling subnetwork of the first communications network for communicating signaling information in accordance with a signaling protocol associated with the signaling subnetwork; c. establishing a third plurality of communications links to the second communications network for communicating information in accordance with a communications protocol associated with the second communications network; and d. coordinating the transfer of information between the first communications network and the second communications network using one of the first plurality of communications links, one of the second plurality of

communications links and one of the third plurality of communications link, wherein the step of coordinating the transfer of information between the first communications network and the second communications network includes initiating at least one of the tasks of communications session setup, communications session tear down, bridging of two communications requests or routing of a communications to a communications access point in one of the first communications network or the second communications network. 63. The method according to claim 62, wherein at least one of the first plurality of communications links is established through one of a plurality of available access points contained within the payload subnetwork of the first communications network. 64. The method according to claim 62, wherein at least one of the second plurality of communications links is established through one of a plurality of available access points contained within the signaling subnetwork of the first communications network. 65. The method according to claim 62, wherein at least one of the third plurality of communications links is established through one of a plurality of available access points contained within the second communications network.

The instant application claims the following limitations: 1. A system for bridging a first communications network having a payload subnetwork and a signaling subnetwork with a second communications network that is packet-switched, comprising: a. a communications management object that coordinates the transfer of information between the first communications network and the second communications network; b. a payload object linked to the communications management object, wherein said payload object transfers payload information between the system and the payload subnetwork of the first communications network; c. a signaling object linked to the communications management object, wherein said

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signaling object transfers signaling information between the system and the signaling subnetwork of the first communications network in accordance with a signaling protocol associated with the signaling subnetwork; and d. a packet object linked to the communications management object, wherein said packet object transfers payload and address information between the system and the second communications network in accordance with a communications protocol associated with the second communications network. 2. The system according to claim 1, wherein the payload object may be linked to a plurality of access points contained within the payload subnetwork of the first communications network. 3. The system according to claim 1, wherein the signaling object may be linked to a plurality of access points contained within the signaling subnetwork of the first communications network. 4. The system according to claim 1, wherein the packet object may be linked to a plurality of access points contained within the second communications network. 6. The system according to claim 1, wherein the communications management object further coordinates the handling of operations, administration, maintenance and provisioning functions. 7. The system according to claim 1, further comprising an application resource object that coordinates the handling of operations, administration, maintenance and provisioning functions. 8. The system according to claim 1, further including an application database, said database comprising communications contact information for a plurality of users. 9. The system according to claim 8, wherein the application database further comprises a set of user profiles including a user's preferred communications mode for having communications contact established with another. 10. The system according to claim 1, wherein the payload object includes signal processing capability for processing the payload information. 11. The system according to claim 1, wherein the packet object includes

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signal processing capability for processing the payload information. 12. The system, according to claim 1, further comprising an application resource object having signal processing capability for processing the payload information. 13. The system according to claim 1, wherein the communications management object coordinates a transfer of information between the first communications network and the second communications network by causing the system to perform the tasks of: a. determining a desired characteristic associated with a requested communication; b. determining traffic conditions for each of the first communications network and the second communications network; and c. determining from the traffic conditions and from the desired characteristic associated with the requested communication whether to route the communication to the first communications network or to the second communications network. 14. The system according to claim 13, wherein the desired characteristic associated with a requested communications includes at least one of a desired quality of service for the communication, a time during which the communication is to be routed, a cost of routing the communication, or a user's preferred communications mode for having communications contact established with another. 15. The system according to claim 13, wherein the communications management object coordinates a transfer of information between the first communications network and the second communications network by causing the system to further perform the tasks of: e. selecting an access point of the determined network to which the communication is to be routed; and f. initiating the routing of the communication to the selected access point for the determined network. 16. The system according to claim 1, wherein the communications management object coordinates a transfer of information between the first communications network and the second communications network by causing the system to perform at least one

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of the tasks of: a. initiating a communications contact in response to a user clicking a hypertext link; b. sending a message to a user requesting a return communications contact; c. scheduling a time to initiate a communications contact between two users; d. initiating a sequence of communications contacts until the party to be contacted is reached; and e. directing a communications contact addressed to a user to a mailbox. 17. The system according to claim 1, wherein the communications management object coordinates a transfer of information between the first communications network and the second communications network by causing the system to route a communication based upon at least one of a desired quality of service for the communication, a time during which the communication is to be routed, a cost of routing the communication, or a user's preferred communications mode for having communications contact established with another. 18. The system according to claim 1, wherein the communications management object coordinates a transfer of information between the first communications network and the second communications network by causing the system to bridge a communications session between two users such that information is transferred between the users over each of the first communications network and the second communications network. 19. The system according to claim 1, further comprising an application resource object that coordinates the handling of multimedia-enhanced voice communications. 20. The system according to claim 19, wherein the handling, of multimedia-enhanced voice communications includes receiving voice information over the first communications network and information other than voice information over the second communications network. 21. The system according to claim 20, wherein the information other than voice information received over the second communications network is directed to a multimedia mailbox. 22. The system according

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to claim 1, further comprising an application resource object that coordinates the task of universal messaging, said task of universal messaging including the integration of email messages, facsimile messages, and voice messages into a common mailbox. 23. The system according to claim 22, wherein the task of universal messaging further includes the conversion of the content of messages from one format to another. 24. The system according to claim 22, wherein the task of universal messaging further includes retaining the multimedia content of received messages. 25. The system according to claim 22, wherein the task of universal messaging further includes initiating a return message in response to a user clicking a hypertext link. 26. The system according to claim 22, wherein the task of universal messaging includes causing the system to perform at least one of the tasks of: a. retrieving at least one of a stored e-mail message, a stored voice mail message, or a stored facsimile message, wherein the stored e-mail message, the stored voice mail message, and the stored facsimile message may be stored in different sites; b. scheduling of delivery and storage of requested multimedia information; c. storing a message; d. printing a message; and e. forwarding a message. 27. The system according to claim 26, wherein the at least one of a stored e-mail message, a stored voice mail message, or a stored facsimile message may be retrieved by invoking an interactive voice response system that facilitates retrieval of a text-based 6 message using a telephone. 28. The system according to claim 1, wherein 2 information is retrieved from a Web-based server 3 accessible over the second communications network using 4 a telephone linked to the system through the first 5 communications network. 29. The system according to claim 28, wherein the 2 information retrieved from a Web-based server is 3 directed by the system to at least one of a multimedia 4 device or a multimedia mailbox. 30. The system according to claim 28, wherein the information

retrieved from a Web-based server is 3 converted from one format to another. 37. A method of bridging a first communications network having a payload subnetwork and a signaling subnetwork with a second communications network that is packet-switched, comprising the steps of: a. establishing a first communications link to the payload subnetwork of the first communications network for communicating payload information; b. establishing a second communications link to the signaling subnetwork of the first communications network for communicating signaling information in accordance with a signaling protocol associated with the signaling subnetwork; c. establishing a third communications link to the second communications network for communicating information in accordance with a communications protocol associated with the second communications network; and d. coordinating the transfer of information between the first communications network and the second communications network using the first communications link, the second communications link and the third communications link. 38. The method according to claim 37, wherein the first communications link is established through one of a plurality of available access points contained within the payload subnetwork of the first communications network. 39. The method according to claim 37, wherein the second communications link is established through one of a plurality of available access points contained within the signaling subnetwork of the first communications network. 40. The method. according to claim 37, wherein the third communications link is established through one of a plurality of available access points contained within the second communications network. 42. The method according to claim 37, further comprising the step of coordinating operations, administration, maintenance and provisioning functions. 43. The method according to claim 37, wherein the step of coordinating the transfer of information between the first

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communications network and the second communications network includes use of a database containing communications contact information for a plurality of users. 44. The method according to claim 43, wherein the database further contains a set of user profiles including a user's preferred communications mode for having communications contact established with another. 45. The method according to claim 37, further comprising the step of processing payload information using signal processing techniques. 46. The method according to claim 37, wherein the step of coordinating the transfer of information between the first communications network and the second communications network includes the steps of: a. determining a desired characteristic associated with a requested communication; b. determining traffic conditions for each of the first communications network and the second communications network; and c. determining from the traffic conditions and from the desired characteristic associated with the requested communication whether to route the communication to the first communications network or to the second communications network. 47. The method according to claim 46, wherein the desired characteristic associated with a requested communications includes at least one of a desired quality of service for the communication, a time during which the communication is to be routed, a cost of routing the communication, or a user's preferred communications mode for having communications contact established with another.

48. The method according to claim 46, wherein the step of coordinating the transfer of information between the first communications network and the second communications network further includes the steps of: e. selecting an access point of the determined network to which the communication is to be routed; and f. initiating the routing of the communication to the selected access point for the determined network. 49. The method according to claim 37, wherein the

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step of coordinating the transfer of information between the first communications network and the second communications network includes at least one of the steps of a. initiating a communications contact in response to a user clicking a hypertext link; b. sending a message to a user requesting a return communications contact; c. scheduling a time to initiate a communications contact between two users; d. initiating a sequence of communications contacts until the party to be contacted is reached; and e. directing a communications contact addressed to a user to a mailbox. 50. The method according to claim 37, wherein the step of coordinating the transfer of information between the first communications network and the second communications network includes the step of routing a communication based upon at least one of a desired quality of service for the communication, a time during which the communication is to be routed, a cost of routing the communication, or a user's preferred communications mode for having communications contact established with another. 51. The method according to claim 37, wherein the step of coordinating the transfer of information between the first communications network and the second communications network includes the step of bridging a communications session between two users such that information is transferred between the users over each of the first communications network and the second communications network. 52. The method according to claim 37, further comprising the step of coordinating multimedia-enhanced voice communications. 53. The method according to claim 37, wherein the step of coordinating multimedia-enhanced voice communications includes receiving voice information over the first communications network and information other than voice information over the second communications network. 54. The method according to claim 53, wherein the step of coordinating multimedia-enhanced voice communications further includes directing the

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information other than voice information received over the second communications network to a multimedia mailbox. 55. The method according to claim 37, further comprising the step of universal messaging, said step of universal messaging including the integration of e-mail messages, facsimile messages, and voice messages into a common mailbox. 56. The method according to claim 55, wherein the step of universal messaging further includes converting the content of messages from one format to another. 57. The method according to claim 55, wherein the step of universal messaging further includes retaining the multimedia content of received messages. 58. The method according to claim 55, wherein the step of universal messaging further includes initiating a return message in response to a user clicking a hypertext link. 59. The method according to claim 55, wherein the step of universal messaging further includes at least one of the steps of: a. retrieving at least one of a stored e-mail message, a stored voice mail message, or a stored facsimile message, wherein the stored e-mail message, the stored voice mail message, and the stored facsimile message may be stored in different sites; b. scheduling of delivery and storage of requested multimedia information; c. storing a message; d. printing a message; and e. forwarding a message. 60. The method according to claim 59, wherein the at least one of a stored e-mail message, a stored voice mail message, or a stored facsimile message may be retrieved by invoking an interactive voice response system that facilitates retrieval of a text-based message using a telephone. 61. The method according to claim 37, wherein the step of coordinating the transfer of information between the first communications network and the second communications network includes the step of retrieving information from a Web-based server accessible over the second communications network using a telephone linked to the method through the first communications network. 62. The method according to claim 61,

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wherein the information retrieved from a Web-based server is directed to at least one of a multimedia device or a multimedia mailbox. 63. The method according to claim 61, wherein the information retrieved from a Web-based server is converted from one format to another. 68. A system for bridging a first communications network having a payload subnetwork and a signaling subnetwork with a second communications network that is packet-switched, comprising: a bridge component to selectively transfer information between the first communication network and the second communication network, the bridge component being configured to: a. determine a desired characteristic associated with a requested communication; b. determine traffic conditions for each of the first communications network and the second communications network; and c. determine from the traffic conditions and from the desired characteristic associated with the requested communication whether to route the communication to the first communications network or to the second communications network. 69. The system according to claim 68, wherein the desired characteristic associated with a requested communications includes at least one of a desired quality of service for the communication, a time during which the communication is to be routed, a cost of routing the communication, or a user's preferred communications mode for having communications contact established with another. 70. The system according to claim 68, wherein the bridge component is further configured to: d. select an access point of the determined network to which the communication is to be routed; and e. initiate the routing of the communication to the selected access point for the determined network. 71. The system according to claim 7, wherein said application resource object comprises a universal messaging node, said universal messaging node is configured to integrate at least two messages having different types. 72. The system according to claim 71,

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wherein said different message types include a plurality of an e-mail message, a facsimile message, a voice mail message and a video mail message. 73. The system according to claim 71, wherein said universal messaging node is configured to provide access to each of said different message types over at least one of said first communication network and said second communication network. 74. The system according to claim 73, wherein said first communication network is a POTS network. 75. the system according to claim 71, wherein said universal messaging node has signal processing capability for processing the payload information. 76. The system according to claim 8, wherein said application database includes a data set to support a plurality of service applications. 77. The system according to claim 8, wherein said application database is an active user registry database (AUR) that is configured to store user communications contact information including at least one of a telephone number, a facsimile number, a mobile telephone number, and an e-mail address. 78. The system according to claim 77, wherein said AUR is further configured to store at least one of a set of user profiles and at least one user's preferred communications option. 79. The system according to claim 8, further comprising an application resource object that is configured to coordinate the handling of operations, administration, maintenance and provisioning functions. 80. The system according to claim 79, wherein said application resource object and said application database are each linked to said communications management object. 81. The system according to claim 8, wherein said application database is configured to determine a user's Internet Protocol (IP) address. The following elements are recited in the patent claims but not in the instant application: initiating at least one of the tasks of communications session setup, communications session tear down, bridging of two communications requests or routing of a communications to a

communications access point in one of the first communications network or the second communications network. The application's claims are nearly identical in every other respect to the patent claims. Therefore, the application's claims are simply broader version of the patented claims. It is the examiner's position that broadening the patented claims by not claiming the above elements of the patented claims would have been obvious to one of the ordinary skill in the art in view of the patented claims. It is important to note that the instant application is a continuation of the application which yielded the patent (U.S. Patent No. 6,134,235) used herein as the basis for the obviousness type of double patenting rejection. The application is attempting to broaden the parent application's claims by eliminating some the claimed elements in the continuation at issue here.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

3. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent, or on an international application by another who has fulfilled the requirements of paragraphs (1), (2), and (4) of section 371(c) of this title before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent.

The changes made to 35 U.S.C. 102(e) by the American Inventors Protection Act of 1999 (AIPA) and the Intellectual Property and High Technology Technical Amendments Act of 2002 do not apply when the reference is a U.S. patent resulting directly or indirectly from an international application filed before November 29, 2000. Therefore, the prior art date of the

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reference is determined under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) prior to the amendment by the AIPA (pre-AIPA 35 U.S.C. 102(e)).

4. Claims 68-70 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Farris et al. (US 6,574,216).

Farris et al. discloses a communication system comprising the following features: as depicted in Fig. 3, 4, 5, 6A, 6B, regarding claim 68, a system (13, 92) for bridging a first communications network (10) having a payload subnetwork and a signaling subnetwork with a second communications network (50) that is packet-switched, comprising: a bridge component (92) to selectively transfer information between the first communication network (10) and the second communication network (50), the bridge component being configured to: a. determine a desired characteristic (122) associated with a requested communication; b. determine traffic conditions (122) for each of the first communications network (10) and the second communications network (50); and c. determine (130) from the traffic conditions and from the desired characteristic associated with the requested communication whether to route the communication to the first communications network (10) or to the second communications network (50); regarding claim 69, wherein the desired characteristic associated with a requested communications includes at least one of a desired quality of service (204) for the communication, a time during which the communication is to be routed, a cost of routing the communication, or a user's preferred communications mode for having communications contact established with another; regarding claim 70, wherein the bridge component (130) is further configured to: d. select an access point (210, 212, 216, 218, 220) of the determined network to

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which the communication is to be routed; and e. initiate the routing of the communication to the selected access point for the determined network. See column 9, line 35 to column 11, line 58.

Conclusion

5. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Shaffer et al. (US 5,898,668) discloses a system for increasing quality of service.

Chan et al. (US 4,556,972) discloses an arrangement for routing data packets through a circuit switch.

6. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Kwang B. Yao whose telephone number is 703-308-7583. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Chi H Pham can be reached on 703-305-4378. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

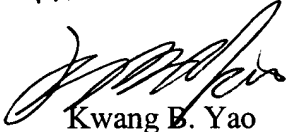
Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

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KWANG BIN YAO
PRIMARY EXAMINER



Kwang B. Yao
June 28, 2004